

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-32 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 11, 20 and 21 are amended.

The Examiner is thanked for the courtesies extended to Applicant's representative during the telephone conference conducted October 11, 2006, October 16, 2006, and October 23, 2006. The amendments to claims 11, 20 and 21 reflect the discussions and agreements reached during the telephone conferences regarding these claims, and more particularly, the amendments suggested by the Examiner to place the application in condition for allowance. Prompt examination and swift allowance are respectfully solicited.

Entry of the amended claims is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 since the amendments: (1) place the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (2) do not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration (since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution without incorporating additional subject matter); (3) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; and/or (4) place the application in better form for appeal (if necessary). Entry is thus requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claims 1-10 and 27-29 are allowed. Further, it is respectfully submitted that, as agreed during the telephone conferences conducted with the Examiner, the amendments submitted herewith to independent claims 11, 20 and 21 should place independent claims 11, 20 and 21, as well as claims 12-19, 22-26 and 30-32, which depend respectively therefrom, in condition for allowance.

II. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 11-26 and 30-32 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,805,139 to Uehara in view of Rudd, U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0180704. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As set forth above, independent claims 11, 20 and 21 have been amended as agreed during the various telephone conferences with the Examiner. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 11, 20 and 21 are allowable over the applied combination, and thus the rejection of independent claims 11, 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Uehara in view of Rudd should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 12-19, 22-26 and 30-32 are allowable at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claims 11, 20 and 21, from which they respectively depend, as well as for their added features.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned, JOANNA K. MASON, at the telephone number listed below.

Reply to Office Action of **October 19, 2006**

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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